

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
JB Pritzker, Governor

**LISC**

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**STATE OF ILLINOIS JOINS LISC AND CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVES TO  
LAUNCH APPLICATION FOR \$25 MILLION CAPITAL GRANTS THROUGH NEW  
REBUILD DISTRESSED COMMUNITIES PROGRAM**

*The application will open on Tuesday, October 27 and offer opportunity to rebuild for small businesses and communities that experienced damages from civil unrest. Grants will be made in amounts ranging from \$1,000 to \$200,000.*

**CHICAGO**—The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) today joined the Local Initiatives Support Group (LISC) and Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives (CNI) in announcing the opening of applications and plans to coordinate reimbursement and capital repairs on Tuesday, October 27, as part of the Rebuild Distressed Communities (RDC) program. The new program will direct \$25 million in funding to help cover the costs of civil-unrest-related repairs while also supporting new investments in economically distressed communities across Illinois. To ensure that communities facing the most acute damages are able to receive support in applying, qualifying and receiving repair work, the State of Illinois has teamed up with local organizations, LISC and CNI, to expedite the review process and ensure assistance follows the needs.

“We know that for many communities and businesses facing unprecedented burdens set forth during the pandemic, recent events of civil unrest have dealt a devastating blow that puts our communities, and our economy, at risk,” **said DCEO Director Erin B. Guthrie.** “Under the leadership of Governor Pritzker, we’ve worked from the beginning of this crisis to deploy funding widely to those who need it most. This new program leverages our Illinois capital program to direct new investments in community resiliency and help small businesses and community organizations working to restore our commercial corridors to their former glory.”

Selected via a competitive process, LISC and CNI will conduct outreach, coordinate local qualified vendors to perform repairs, and provide funds to cover the cost of completed repairs and building improvements for businesses in eligible communities across the state. Reimbursements can range from \$1,000 to \$200,000 depending on eligibility and the extent of damages. Additionally, LISC will host the application for the grants on its website.

“LISC is committed to supporting and strengthening communities by increasing opportunities for residents who live, work and do business throughout Illinois,” **said Meghan Harte, Executive Director of LISC Chicago.** “We are thrilled to be a part of Rebuild Distressed Communities and continue to invest in the prosperity and wellbeing of businesses that need it most.”

To ensure equity in the program, priority for funding will be given to small businesses, underinsured or uninsured businesses, women and minority-owned businesses, and essential - such as grocery

stores - and businesses in communities that have experienced historic disinvestment. The program also prioritizes contractors from minority, women, and veteran owned businesses to perform the work.

“We know businesses and their employees are hurting during this difficult time, particularly those in communities where resources are scarce,” **said David Doig, President of CNI.** “CNI is honored to be joining forces with the DCEO and LISC to help businesses in under-resourced communities gain access to the financial support they need to recover as quickly as possible.”

A list of all eligible zip codes is [here](#). Businesses not listed in those zip codes may still be eligible if they operate in an economically distressed area, [listed here](#), and may apply to have their zip code included. Applications will be accepted in rounds until funding is exhausted, with dates for each round and deadline for that specific round posted on the LISC website. The first application round will open on Tuesday, October 27 with the deadline of 5 p.m. on Tuesday, November 10. To submit an application or for more information, visit the LISC website at <https://www.lisc.org/chicago/regional-stories/rebuild-illinois-distressed-communities-grant/>.

The first round of RDC funds are expected to be released in November. LISC and CNI have brought aboard local contractors to conduct repairs, which will help streamline the repairs for local businesses facing losses while ensuring local firms are first in line for the work. All projects will honor state BEP goals.

To assist small businesses, community organizations, and nonprofits with navigating the application process for RDC, DCEO will team up with LISC and CNI to host a series of webinars detailing the grant opportunities, required documentation, and more. The following webinars are scheduled:

- Wednesday, October 28, 2020 3:30-4:30 p.m. – [Link to register](#)
- Friday, October 30, 2020 12-1 p.m. (En Español) – [Link to register](#)
- Friday, November 6, 2020 11 a.m.-12 p.m. – [Link to register](#)

For more information on the application and webinar schedule visit <https://www.lisc.org/chicago/regional-stories/rebuild-illinois-distressed-communities-grant/>.

This announcement is the latest in a series of grants made available by the State of Illinois for small businesses in Illinois suffering losses as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Namely, this includes over \$1 billion in funding opportunities launched to help small businesses and communities facing losses as a result of COVID-19. These programs have a special focus on equity and the most heavily impacted communities and businesses. This includes the Business Interruption Grants (BIG) program – now accepting applications for \$220 million available for small business grants. More information on these programs can be found on [DCEO's website](#) or by following the department on social @ILDCEO.

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## About LISC

With residents and partners, LISC forges resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity across America — great places to live, work, visit, do business and raise families. Since 1979, LISC has

invested \$20 billion to build or rehab 400,500 affordable homes and apartments and develop 66.8 million square feet of retail, community and educational space. For more information, please visit [LISC Chicago](#) and [LISC Central Illinois](#) website.

#### **About Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives**

CNI is a nonprofit community and economic development organization working with stakeholders to identify and implement high-impact projects for revitalizing low-to-moderate income communities. CNI coordinates public and private investments, acting as a developer and as a lender to encourage opportunities for combatting community deterioration: growing small businesses; creating training and jobs; and developing, renovating, and preserving affordable housing. Since its inception in 2010, CNI has been revitalizing the Pullman neighborhood and other disinvested urban neighborhoods through use of New Market Tax Credits (NMTC), equity investments, and micro-loans through its Certified Financial Development Institution subsidiary, the CNI Micro Finance Group (CNIMFG). CNIMFG has loaned more than \$3 million to 150 small businesses in under-resourced neighborhoods to create opportunities that help build sustainable communities and improve peoples' lives.